

AB

AMUSEMENT BUSINESS®

**ELTON SETS
CAREER RECORD
AT \$2.2 MIL**
See Page 11



\$2.50

Nov. 19, 1988

INSIDE...

FIGHTING FOR THE BUCKS

Titan Entertainment, the parent company of the World Wrestling Federation, had the exclusive distribution rights to the pay-per-view cable television broadcast, closed-circuit exhibitions and international sales of the Nov. 7 Sugar Ray Leonard-Donny Lalonde boxing match. The closed-circuit rights, in turn, were sold to 26 promoters in the U.S. who held their events in venues ranging from small nightclubs to large convention centers. See story on Page 12.

THRILLS BY THE MILLIONS

Good weather and a new water ride helped Carowinds set an all-time attendance record this season at 1,293,968. That's 121,466 more than last year. Meanwhile, attendance was up almost eight percent at Busch Gardens The Old Country to 2,094,057. This is the fifth time in the park's 14-year history that attendance has topped the two million mark. See stories on Pages 28 & 30.

THE SNOWMAN COMETH

Holiday concert tours traditionally begin around Thanksgiving, and this year a bevy of acts have new holiday-themed shows they are taking on the road. Among them: Andy Williams, Gary Morris, John Denver, Kenny Rogers, Larry Gatlin & The Gatlin Brothers, and a family outing including Marie Osmond, the Osmond Brothers and the Osmond Boys. This week, AB takes a look at the Williams, Morris and Denver productions. See story on Page 7.

ONLY THE TEAM LOST

Everything went as planned at Miami Arena on Nov. 5 for the opening game of that city's new NBA expansion team, the Heat. The team premiered to a sellout of 15,600. More than 12,500 of those seats belonged to season ticket holders. Another 10 of the 40 home games are near sellouts. Single-game tickets are available, but are going quickly. Team Owner Zev Bufman said that opening night was "a perfect 10." See story on Page 15.

FAIRS ARE HEADING SOUTH

Black clouds dumped several days of constant rain on the Louisiana State Fair which caused gate attendance to drop 102,000 from last year to 523,000. Over in Florida, the Pensacola Interstate Fair was up 10 percent to 473,039. Meanwhile, the Greater Jacksonville Agricultural Fair gained 14 percent and ended up with a record 610,374. See stories on Page 32.

IN AB'S SHOW SECTION...

The independent midway at the Arizona State Fair brought in an all-time high gross of \$4,005,700, up 12 percent from last year. Twenty-six different ride operators fielded 78 rides. Fair officials said a major factor in the revenue jump of \$430,200 was the 78 percent increase in the advance sales of ride tickets. See story on Page 42.

IAAPA Conclave's Program To Focus On Govt. Relations

By LINDA DECKARD

Government relations, entertainment and international growth will be given more prominent play in the 1988 program at the International Assn. of Amusement Parks & Attractions (IAAPA) convention in Dallas.

Boyd Jensen, Lagoon Park, Farmington, Utah, was in charge of that program as IAAPA third vice president and he suggests attendees "incline thine ears to learn," quoting Proverbs as he is inclined to do.

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MASKED JUDGES — Gloria Mills, right, director of marketing at the Indiana Convention Center & Hoosier Dome, Indianapolis, is seen with four judges of a poster contest held Oct. 31 before the first-ever telecast of an ABC Monday Night Football game from the stadium. Masks of ABC Sports broadcasters were distributed to all who attended the game, which was a sellout. See related story on Page 6. (AB Photo)

Arizona State Fair Sets Attendance Mark As 1,031,984 Attend For 9.2% Increase

By RAY WADDELL

PHOENIX, Ariz. — A 78 percent increase in advance admissions and discounted ride tickets helped propel attendance at the Arizona State Fair to an all-time high, with a turnstile count of 1,031,984.

That number reflected an increase of

9.2 percent from last year's attendance of 1,001,800.

The gate gross was \$2,882,100, up \$677,800 (30.8 percent) from 1987. Tickets were \$5 for adults and \$1 for both seniors and children ages six through 12 during the fair's Oct. 20-Nov. 6 run.

The fair enjoyed the biggest day in its 104-year history on Nov. 5, a Saturday, as 124,111 passed through the turnstiles.

However, the number of which fair officials were proudest was the midway gross total of \$4,005,700, up \$430,200

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GET IT IN ADVANCE — Pre-fair sales of admission and ride coupons helped post a record Arizona State Fair, Phoenix. Discussing success, from left: Mike Sandefur, midway coordinator; Mark Armstrong, commercial sales locator and manager of the Maricopa County Fair, also held in Phoenix, and Gary Spence, assistant midway coordinator. (AB Photo)

Phoenix Officials' Approval Expected For \$60 Mil Arena

By LINDA DECKARD

The Phoenix City Council is expected to approve exclusive negotiation with the Phoenix Suns Partnership Ltd. to build an 18,000-seat, \$60 million arena in downtown Phoenix. The council was to vote on the proposal Nov. 15.

A mayor's advisory council recommended the partnership, which also owns the National Basketball Assn. (NBA) Phoenix Suns and is led by team President Jerry Colangelo, over two other bids, said Bob Ryan, program manager, Community Economic Development Dept.

The presented development team included Spectacor as management firm, Ellerbe Beckett as architect, and Huntcor as

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AB Auds & Arenas



ON ICE — ...at Madison Square Garden (MSG) on Oct. 29 was Benson & Hedges On Ice, an ice show featuring Olympic figure skaters accompanied by a live symphony orchestra. The five-city tour grossed in excess of \$800,000. Warming up before the show, from left: Steven D. Alper, president, MSG Enterprises; Brian Orser, Olympic silver medalist; Ellen Merlo, vice president/events and promotions, Phillip Morris (parent company of the Benson & Hedges brand); Scott Hamilton, Olympic gold medalist, and Robert D. Kain, senior corporate vice president, International Management Group. (AB Photo)

Titan Entertainment Awaiting Final Count Of Leonard-Lalonde Pay-Per-View Audience

By CANDICE CARMEL

Boxing took on a new meaning for Titan Entertainment when Sugar Ray Leonard knocked out Donny (Golden Boy) Lalonde during the ninth round of a double-championship bout at Caesars Palace, Las Vegas, Nov. 7.

Titan Entertainment, a division of TitanSports Inc. and the parent company of the World Wrestling Federation, was the exclusive distributor of pay-per-view cable television, closed-circuit exhibitions, and international sales for the fight. It is the first time the com-

pany has done a pay-per-view event.

The suggested retail price for the cable hookup was \$29.95, and the fight was available on 800 cable systems clearing 10 million households in the U.S.

Based on previous viewer-per-household levels, Titan Entertainment had estimated the pay-per-view audience for the fight would exceed six million people.

Figures were unavailable yet, but "it would be nice to reach a five percent buy rate," said Michael Weber, director of media

relations for TitanSports Inc. "Based on past pay-per-view events, we were anticipating 60 percent of the buys to be on the day of the event."

While the live event in Vegas grossed \$7,549,000 with an attendance of 13,246, estimates on sales of domestic and international closed-circuit rights were still unavailable. International television rights were sold to 70 countries.

"Closed-circuit rights were sold on flat fees, percentage deals and guarantees to 26 individual closed-circuit exhibitors in the U.S.," said Weber. "We're unable to make any projections yet at this point."

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IAAM Crowd Mgmt. Seminar Nov. 13-16

The International Assn. of Auditorium Managers, in association with Georgia State University's School of Hospitality Administration, is presenting the sixth annual Crowd Management Seminar, Nov. 13-16 at the Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta.

The conference provides professional development for public assembly facility managers, their staffs and industry personnel on the subject of effective management and supervision of large crowds and events. The registration fee is \$250.

The seminar will include workshops on pre-event security planning, emergency procedures, coordination of security services at large or special events, and case studies of incidents.

A portion of the seminar will be conducted at the newly-opened Georgia Public Safety Training Center, with presentations by the Secret Service on the planning and execution of the 1988 Democratic National Convention.

A new topic on the program is crowd management from a promoter's or act manager's perspective.

Mkt. Square Invests \$6 Mil In Electronics, Video Replay

By VERNELL HACKETT

Market Square Arena, Indianapolis, Ind., has replaced its antiquated scoreboard with a state-of-the-art, four-sided board in the middle of the arena.

On the east end of the building will be another board with animation capability. This board will also be able to simultaneously carry the points scored, fouls, rebounds and number of assists for all 10 players in a basketball game and is, according to arena Vice President and General Manager Rick Fuson, one of the few boards in the country with those capabilities.

"We studied the video replay market and decided to do something different," said Fuson. The four video screens will hang in the four corners of the arena, visible to everyone at any event. "We looked at all the major manufacturing companies for video equipment and found them very expensive. We found two small companies, one in southern California and one in northern California, who together have developed a new front projection system. We will have the first one of its kind in the country."

In addition to the new eight foot by 12 foot scoreboard and the 16 foot by 22 foot video screens, Market Square Arena will sport new electric scorer tables, game time clocks over the baskets and an outside message board.

"We feel that we will have the finest combination of electronics and video replay in the country," Fuson said, adding that the system will also have capability for high density television which will put them on the edge of future technology with the \$6 million investment.

In addition to being the home of the Indiana Pacers basketball team, Market Square Arena has hosted various music concerts as well as other sporting events, including the Marlboro Country Music Tour, an Amy Grant concert, Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus and the World Wrestling Federation.

Upcoming events include a Rod Stewart concert, Disney On Ice and high school basketball double-

headers. A December event, titled "My Indiana Holiday," will feature local talent as skaters, actors and singers, with special guest Bart Conner. Gloria Gaither will also be involved in the event, scheduled for Dec. 11.

Market Square Arena hosts some 30 concerts a year, with heavy metal music finding a particularly good market in Indianapolis.

"The overall attendance for concerts has been down somewhat over the summer but I think you will find that to be the same everywhere," Fuson said. "The dollar has to be stretched, and people are choosing the events they will attend."

Fuson and Executive Director Larry Taylor agreed that in Indianapolis, residents are finding

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Redfearn Chosen As General Mgr. Of Atlanta Venue

Steve Redfearn has been named general manager of the under-construction Lakewood Amphitheater, Atlanta.

That appointment, effective Dec. 1, was confirmed by Marc Benson, president, MCA Concerts Inc. The new, \$8 million, 18,000-seat amphitheater is a joint venture between PACE Entertainment Group and MCA Concerts (AB, Nov. 12).

Redfearn had been general manager of the Pacific Amphitheater, Costa Mesa, Calif., a facility owned and operated by Ned West, a division of the Nederlander Corp. He had been general manager there "since I hired away the last general manager, Gene Felling," Benson laughed. Felling is general manager of MCA's Universal Amphitheater, Universal City.

Redfearn was Felling's assistant prior to becoming general manager in Costa Mesa. Before that, he was tour manager for Emmylou Harris.

Lakewood is to open next May or June.

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HAPPY WITH SCOREBOARD — Larry Taylor, left, and Rick Fuson of the Market Square Arena, Indianapolis, Ind., stand in front of the arena's new scoreboard before it was installed high above center court as part of the venue's \$6 million upgrade. Fuson is the venue's vice president and general manager; Taylor is its executive director. (AB Photo)

Titan Entertainment Awaiting Final...

Continued from Page 12

He noted, "The individual promoters were from all different backgrounds, with the biggest common denominator coming from boxing or music."

Most of the closed-circuit viewings were in smaller venues such as nightclubs, civic centers and auditoriums, with capacities ranging from 500-2,000.

Titan Entertainment supplied the individual closed-circuit promoters with decoders for the cable systems, and helped them

Ticketmaster Opens Operation In Iowa

Ticketmaster has moved into Iowa with operations on line Oct. 11 at the Iowa State Center, Ames; Des Moines Civic Center; the 15,000-seat Veterans Memorial Auditorium, Des Moines, and the Five Seasons Center in Cedar Rapids.

"People from all our other offices in the region, about eight to 10, are out there working, plus those in the Des Moines office, which is new, with about six to eight on staff there," said Terry Barnes, vice president and general manager of Ticketmaster Midwest, Chicago.

The Iowa State Center includes the 15,000-seat Hilton Coliseum, the C.Y. Stephens Auditorium and the Fisher Theatre.

Barnes said Marshall Pred, who has been with the company in Dallas, is now Ticketmaster general manager in Iowa and Nebraska.

"We had a licensee agreement with Cedar Rapids which we bought back and now Cedar Rapids, Des Moines and Ames will share a distribution system," he said. "We think it will be a great marketplace. There aren't any numbers yet, because we're still expanding and we hope to grow some more. We think it will make a substantial contribution to Ticketmaster."

Tickets for events can be purchased at 17 Ticketmaster Ticket Centers throughout Iowa, including Younker's department stores, That's Entertainment, Omni Records and Tapes, Co-Op Tapes and Records, or through Ticketmaster's network of 180 incoming phone lines.

"In this region, we've found a great partner to assist us in offering ticketing services to our clients and are delighted to be doing business with Ticketmaster in Iowa as well as other locations in the U.S.," said Fred Ordower, vice president, Ogden Allied Facility Management.

Ogden Allied manages Five Seasons Center in Cedar Rapids (AB, April 23) and Iowa State Center (AB, Feb. 27).

make arrangements to rent equipment for the viewing.

Advertising support materials were also supplied in the form of ad shells and radio and TV spots into which five-second tags could be inserted at the end.

Tickets for the live bout ranged from \$2,000-\$1,000 for ringside seats, the latter selling out three to five weeks prior to the fight. Walk-up sales were estimated at 2,000-2,500.

A 15,000-seat facility was erected in the hotel's parking lot to accommodate the matches. Victory Promotions held the rights to the fight and purchased the closed-circuit rights to the following East Coast venues from Titan Entertainment:

- Madison Square Garden's Felt Forum: Attendance was 4,786; ticket gross, \$151,145, with ticket prices of \$50, \$35, and \$25.

- Baltimore (Md.) Arena: Attendance was 2,000. The ticket gross was not available. Ticket price was \$30

- Capital Centre, Landover, Md.: Attendance was 7,500. The ticket gross was not available. Ticket price was \$30.

"Based on attendance figures, that is a reasonable turnout, considering it was a boxing event on a Monday night, which was also competing heavily with a strong pay-per-view audience," Weber said.

On the West Coast, individual promoter Joe Gagliardi of Entertainment by J & J Inc. held closed-circuit rights for six or seven smaller venues.

"Two of the larger venues had 3,000 seats or better, and attendance was about 800 in one and 900 in the other," Gagliardi said. Tickets were in the \$25 range.

"I was competing on a secondary rather than a primary basis, though," he said. "There was greater pay-per-view competition in this area than on the East Coast."

The Leonard-Lalonde fight was for Lalonde's World Boxing Council (WBC) light heavyweight title and the newly-created WBC super middleweight title.

The other two fights were a WBC super lightweight title match between reigning champ Roger Mayweather and Vinny Pazienza, and a WBC super flyweight title match between reigning champ Gilberto Roman and "Sugar Baby" Jose Rojas. Both champions retained their titles after unanimous 12-round decisions.

"From a boxing point of view, it was a great event. The two undercard matches went a full 12 rounds, and the main event went into nine rounds with a knockout," Weber noted.

Coors Extra Gold was the Leonard-Lalonde bout's official sponsor.

Mkt. Square Invests...

Continued from Page 12

more and more activities from which to choose, and they see this trend continuing in coming years as Indianapolis becomes more of a destination point rather than a place to drive through on the way to somewhere else.

Market Square Arena is in the middle of its fiscal year (June-June), and Fuson projects an average year for the facility.

"We are looking for business to turn around after the first of the year, but we are figuring on really an average year for us," he said. "We have just come off two really good years and have 175 events booked for our current fiscal year. We feel very comfortable with that, being in a city the size of Indianapolis."

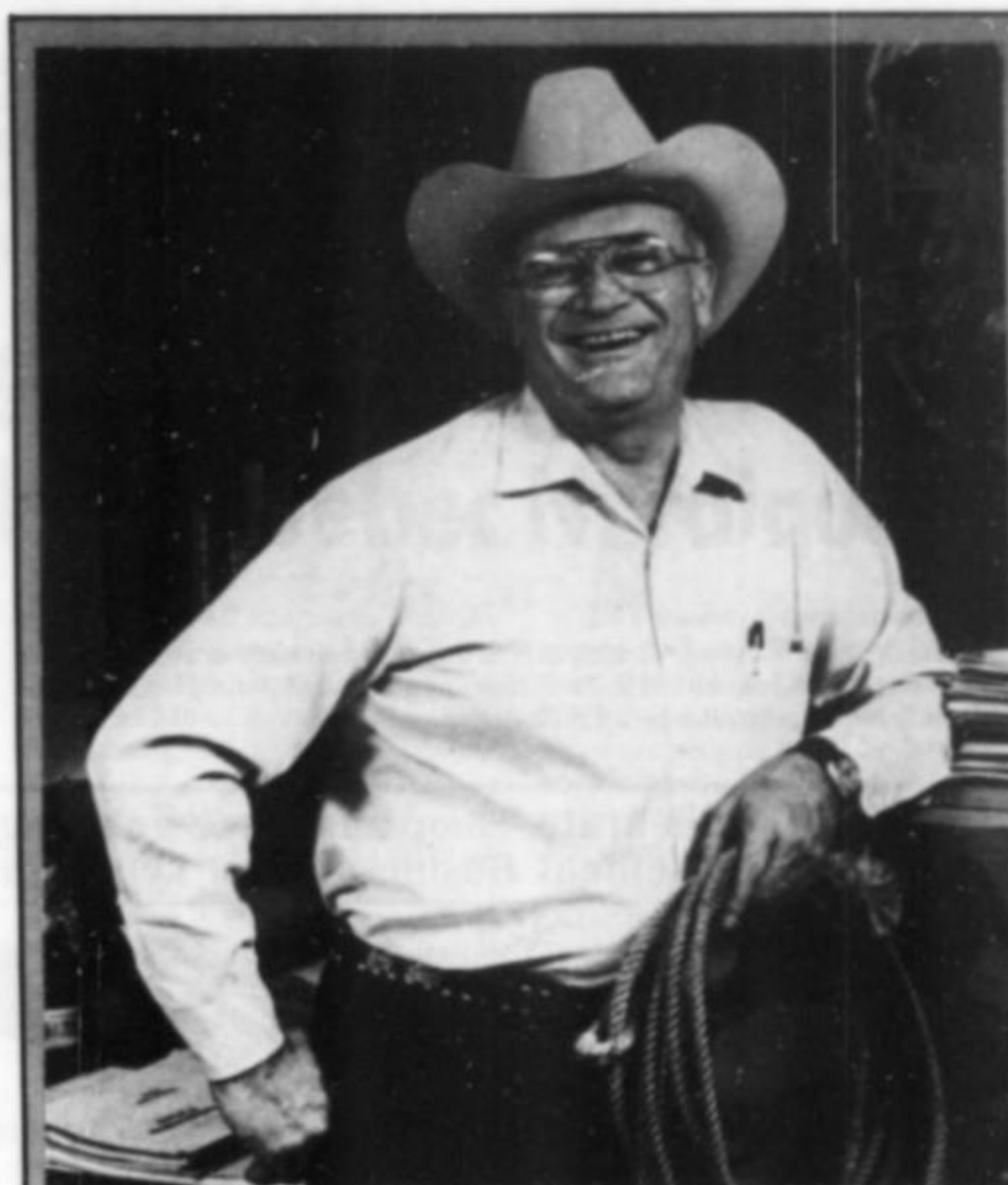
Another aspect of Market Square of which Fuson and Taylor are very proud is the security at the building.

"We were one of the seven original members of the TEAM (Techniques for Effective Alcohol Management) Program for training our personnel in the effective and smart serving of alcoholic beverages," Fuson explained.

The facility has a restaurant, Market Square Gardens, located on the seventh floor, that is available to patrons with tickets for whatever event is going on at the time. This year, concessions has started delivering pizza to people in the seats and is offering submarine sandwiches at the counters.

Improvements are also being made in the parking garages and backstage, including refurbishing the Pacers' dressing rooms and adding a Green Room for use with various events.

"We feel we have taken the building and the city from an up-scale secondary market to a primary market," Fuson explained. "We are just on the verge of being discovered as to how good Indianapolis can be."



Longhorn To Promote IFR

The International Professional Rodeo Assn. has renewed its agreement with W. Bruce Lehrke, above, president and general manager of Nashville-based Longhorn World Championship Rodeo Inc., to promote the International Finals Rodeo (IFR) in Tulsa, Okla., for the next three years.

Lehrke has handled the rodeo twice since 1979, both times showing a considerable profit over previous years: during 1978 and 1979, the rodeo had lost \$183,000. When Lehrke handled the event in 1980, it registered a \$22,000 profit. The 1981, '82 and '83 rodeos, promoted by another company, lost \$122,000.

Lehrke has handled the rodeo since 1984. In that time, despite bad snowstorms in two consecutive years, the event has notched a profit in excess of \$45,000. Ticket sales have also increased 74 percent in that period.

The rodeo determines the International Professional Rodeo Assn. world champions each January. The next event is scheduled for Jan. 12-15 at the Tulsa Convention Center.

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Interested persons should submit resumes no later than Friday, December 2, 1988 by 5:00 p.m.

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